

## ALALAHIAN MISCELLANIES III\*

## 7. Šukubtum in Alalah VII documents

The word in question occurs only in the texts of Alalah VII archive. D. J. Wiseman the editor of the tablets translated it as "rations?".<sup>1</sup> The first commentator of the ration lists, A. Goetze writes in connection with \*243 as follows: "As to the frequent *šu-k/qu-ub/p-tu* etc. . . it should be remarked that 264 16 and 267 10 the determinative LÚ is added. Hence we deal with a profession or a social class. For the formation compare the social class of the *šūzubūtu* pl."<sup>2</sup> G. Giacomakis let its meaning open.<sup>3</sup> But W. von Soden in his *Handwörterbuch* argues that *šukub/ptu(m)* means "ein Gefäß".<sup>4</sup>

Now, let us see our data:

- a) \*243: 14, 29 <PA ZÍZ> *šu-ku-ub-te* (ITU *hi-ia-ri-e*),<sup>5</sup>
- b) \*251: 1-2, 50 *pa-ri-si še-a-am šu-ku-ub-tu-um/a-na* lú-mešSÍB  
ša Nu-ni-gi-ia-šu (ITU *al-la-an-na-tim*),<sup>6</sup>
- c) \*253: 2, 90 <PA še-a-am> *šu-ku-ub-ti* (ITU *pa-ag-ri*),<sup>7</sup>
- d) \*254: 15, 70 <PA še-a-am> *a-na šu-ku-ub-ti* (ITU *pa-[-ag]-ri*),<sup>8</sup>
- e) \*255: 1-2, 2 ME 50 *pa-ri-si ZÍZ/šu-ku-ub-ti* (ITU *li-ik-ka-še*),<sup>9</sup>
- f) \*255: 3, 25 PA ŠE *a-na šu-ku-ub-ti*,
- g) \*268: 11, 40 <<sup>giš</sup>*pa-ri-si ZÍZ*. An. NA> *šu-ku-ub-tum*,<sup>10</sup>
- h) \*276: 1, 20 PA ZÍZ *šu-ku-ub-te*,<sup>11</sup>
- i) \*280: r. 3, 30 <PA ZÍZ> *šu-ku-ub-tun*,<sup>12</sup>
- j) \*264: 10, 70 <*pa-ri-si ŠE*. BA> *šu-ku-ub-ti* (ITU *ša-ta-al-ši*),<sup>13</sup>
- k) \*264: 16, 20 *pa-ri-si ZÍZ* lú *šu-ku-ub-ti* (ITU *ša-ta-al-ši*),
- l) \*267: 10-11, 14 <<sup>giš</sup>*pa-ri-si ki-ša-nu*, ŠA. GAL> *a-na* lú *šu-ku-ub-te*.<sup>14</sup>

\* E. Gaál: Alalahian Miscellanies I, *Annales ... Sectio Classica* VII (1979 [1985]) 7-13; E. Gaál: Alalahian Miscellanies II, in: *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians in Honor of Ernest R. Lacheman* (M. A. Morrison-D. I. Owen, eds.), Winona Lake, Indiana, 1981, 133-135.

First of all we must mention that the interpretation "ein Gefäß" of von Soden does not fit these twelve sentences, because of these are from ration lists and mainly in the first line of the tablet, or in the same line where *šukubtum* occurs the measure of capacity (*parīsum*) and the type of grain or fodder are given. Thus, this word hardly refers to a certain pot which was used perhaps as a measure.

I think so that we can find the key of its interpretation under *b*). In this case it is known that the 50 *parīsums* of barley as *šukubtum* which was the part of the ZI.GA/šītu "Ausgabe, expenditure" of the month Attanati, was given to shepherds under the control of Nuni-giaze.<sup>15</sup> It is also probable that the barley mentioned under *d*) was also delivered to shepherds or horseherds of Nuni-giaze, too, because in line 14 barley as fodder is given to the stud managed by him (may be the next line, line 16 also is in connection with these horseherds/shepherds, because it mentions *bappirum* from which they could prepare beer when they stayed on pastures far from the city).<sup>16</sup>

The quantity of grain mentioned in these texts are relatively high (250, 90, 70, 50, 40, 30, 25 and 20 *parīsums*) without mentioning, referring to the group of people living on rations delivered by the royal household (not mentioning the shepherds of Nuni-giaze).

The <sup>16</sup>*šukubte*/i, or *avil šukubti* is documented on two tablets, he was given 70 *parīsums* of barley, and 20 of emmer, and according to the other tablet, 14 *parīsums* of *kiššānum*.

On the basis of \*251 it is quite promising that the *šukubtum* would have been a special ration which would be given the shepherds by the palace.

In a former article I collected all the texts (and evaluated them from chronological point of view) which mention Nuni-giaze, a groom who appears only in ration lists. It seems to me that he was responsible for shepherds, horseherds, for the royal stud, and in one case (\*279) for cattle, too. In connection with these nine references to him it is worth taking note of the followings:

1. Nuni-giaze receives at the same time the fodder allotment of the horses and the ration of his horseherds (\*248: 7, 8); 2. he receives only the fodder of horses (\*249: 6, 11, barley and lucerne; \*254: 14 [d]; \*255: 12 [e]); 3. Nuni-giaze receives the ration of his shepherds (\*251: 1–2 [b]; \*258: 16; \*279: 6–8 and \*283a: 14–15, in these last two texts the shepherds of Nuni-giaze are mentioned by name, they were given flour and in the last one, salt, too); 4. among the above texts there are four (b, c, d, e) where Nuni-giaze and the terminus technicus *šukubtum* occur together; 5. these four tablets were written in the course of the following months: Attanati, Pagri, and Likkaše/Niqali; 6. other month names connected with the term *šukubtum* are Ħiari and Šatalši.

Let us stop here, because these offer some information. Attanati "ist der siebente Monat in Nuzi und Alalah",<sup>17</sup> *sabūtu* "this Semitic month-name had well-nigh displaced the Hurrian *Altanašwa* by the time the Nuzu documents were written",<sup>18</sup> "this is the month of plowing which corroborates the autumnal season of the month".<sup>19</sup> Attanati corresponds to the Heb-



rew 'Ēthanīm which identical with the Babylonian Tišri.<sup>20</sup> The month name Pagru probably is in connection with the Ugaritic month name *pgm*.<sup>21</sup> The next one, Niqali refers to the harvest (*niggallum/ningallum* is 'sickle')<sup>22</sup> and indicates links with Anatolia, where in the *kārums* there is an agricultural season called *šibit niqallim*, "the size of sickle",<sup>23</sup> It is conceivable that Niqali denotes the early month of harvest, consequently it is equivalent of the Babyloian Nisānu (March – April). The month name Hiari corresponds to the second Babylonian month Ajjāru.<sup>24</sup> The last one, Šatalši which is the Alalahian form of the Nuzi month name Hutalse, is the twelfth month (February – March, the Babylonian Addaru, the time of summer sowing).<sup>25</sup>

On the basis of the month names it seems to me that the *šukubtum* was delivered between the twelfth – second months (this is the period between February and April and in the sixth and seventh months (August and September). The first period is the season of harvest and threshing, the second one is the time of the early sowing.

Let us continue with the remarks on the texts. 7. the texts \*279 and \*283a enumerate the shepherds and horseherds under the control of Nuni-giaze by name. The number of the groups differ, but two persons, Halitanu and Zauta occur in both of them. Five shepherds are documented on \*279, seven on the other text. According to \*283a: 1 – 3 three of them were given 165 *paršums* of flour, an other one (lines 6 – 7) 36 *paršums*, but there are 16, 15 and 10 *paršums* of flour, too. These quantities are very high, too. It is possible that they did not get monthly but yeraly (or twice a year) rations from the royal household. 8. these quantities are much more higher than the 8 *kurrums* of grain mentioned as the wage of shepherds in Codex Hammurāpi § 261. It is possible that the shepherds and horseherds have sold the progeny of the stud or flock over the norm also to the royal household, too. The payment in kind for these animals raised the delivered quantities of grain. We know that Tariba-ammu have sold sheep for 12 *paršums* of emmer (\*269: 30), which is the price of 3 – 6 sheep.<sup>26</sup>

On the basis of the above data we tend to suggest that the Alalahian sheperds, horseherds as their Nuzian colleagues used to transhume.<sup>27</sup> Consequently the *šukubtum*, in my opinion, was the yearly wage, allotment of transhumants. I also think that the word itself is a Nomina actionis of Š-stem from the verb *ekēpu(m)* which means "dicht herankommen".<sup>28</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. J. Wiseman: The Alalakhian Tablets, Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, No. 2, London 1953 (hereafter Al. T.), 163.

<sup>2</sup> A. Goetze: Remarks on the Ration Lists from Alalakh VII, JCS 13(1959) 35.

<sup>3</sup> G. Giacomakis: The Akkadian of Alalah, The Hague 1970, 105.

<sup>4</sup> W. von Soden: AHw 1265b.

<sup>5</sup> D. J. Wiseman: Al.T. 82, Pl. XXXI; D. J. Wiseman: Ration Lists from Alalakh VII, JCS 12 (1959) 21; A. Goetze: JCS 13 (1959) 35.

<sup>6</sup> D. J. Wiseman: Supplementary Copies of Alalakh Tablets, JCS 8 (1954) 17; D. J. Wiseman: JCS 12 (1959) 23; A. Goetze: JCS 13 (1959) 35.

<sup>7</sup> D. J. Wiseman: JCS 8 (1954) 18; D. J. Wiseman: JCS 12 (1959) 23 – 24; A. Goetze: JCS 13 (1959) 35 – 36.

- <sup>8</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 18; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 24; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 36.
- <sup>9</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 18; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 24; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 36.
- <sup>10</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 21; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 27–28.
- <sup>11</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 23; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 31; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 37.
- <sup>12</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 23; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 31–32; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 38.
- <sup>13</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 20; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 26–27; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 36.
- <sup>14</sup> *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 8 (1954) 21; *D. J. Wiseman*: JCS 12 (1959) 27; *A. Goetze*: JCS 13 (1959) 36–37.
- <sup>15</sup> *E. Gaál*: On the Chronology of Alalah Level VII, *Annales ... Sectio Historica* 22 (1982) 32.
- <sup>16</sup> *L. F. Hartman* – *A. L. Oppenheim*: On Beer and Brewing Techniques in Ancient Mesopotamia, *JAOS* Suppl. 10 (1950) 14; *W. Röllig*: Das Bier im Alten Mesopotamien, Berlin 1970, 21 ff.
- <sup>17</sup> *W. von Soden*: AHw 87b.
- <sup>18</sup> *C. H. Gordon* – *E. R. Lacheman*: The Nuzu Menology, *ArOr* 10 (1938) 61.
- <sup>19</sup> *C. H. Gordon* – *E. R. Lacheman*: *ArOr* 10 (1938) 61, note 2.
- <sup>20</sup> *E. J. Bickerman*: Хронология дрезнего Мира, Moscow 1975, 311, Tab. V.
- <sup>21</sup> *J. Aistleitner*: Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache, Berlin 1963, 253; *W. von Soden*: AHw 809b.
- <sup>22</sup> *W. von Soden*: AHw 787a; *J. Aistleitner*: Wörterbuch..., 213.
- <sup>23</sup> *A. Salonen*: Agricultura Mesopotamica, AASFB 149, Helsinki 1968, 197.
- <sup>24</sup> *W. von Soden*: AHw 324b; *C. H. Gordon* – *E. R. Lacheman*: *ArOr* 10 (1938) 57.
- <sup>25</sup> *W. von Soden*: AHw 362a; *C. H. Gordon* – *E. R. Lacheman*: *ArOr* 10 (1938) 63 f.; *B. Landsberger*: Jahreszeiten im Sumerisch-Akkadischen, *JNES* 8 (1949) 284 ff.; *A. Salonen*: Agricultura Mesopotamica, 201.
- <sup>26</sup> In Alalah VII the price of 1 *parsum* of emmer is 1/2 *siglum* of silver which is based on \* 324b; *W. Schwenzner*: Zum altbabylonischen Wirtschaftsleben, Leipzig 1915, 111, the price of a sheep is 2 *siglums* of silver; according to the Hittite Laws (§ 64) the price of a sheep is 1 *siglum* of silver.
- <sup>27</sup> *G. Wilhelm*: Grossgrundbesitz, Sklavenwirtschaft und transhumante Viehzucht im hurritischen Siedlungsraum östlich des Tigris, in: Das Hurritologische Archiv (*V. Haas* – *H. J. Thiel* et al. [eds.]), Berlin 1975, 69 ff.; *S. I. Rudenko*: Studien über das Nomadentum, in: *L. Földes* (ed.): Viehwirtschaft und Hirtenkultur, Budapest 1969, 17.
- <sup>28</sup> *W. von Soden*: AHw 194b f., Š-stem is not documented only Št; *W. von Soden*: Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik, *AnOr* 33, Roma 1952, 67: § 56 j/56 B 23 b, *šukultum* is an analogous derivation as *šukultum* from 'kl or *šubultum* from wbl, may be it means "return, withdrawal" or the like.